

Updated COVID Protocol

August 19, 2021

Dear Families,

The school district has worked diligently to navigate the pandemic with our students' safety our top priority. The Ohio Department of Health continues to recommend students should be in class five days a week and we agree students need to be in our buildings for both academic and social reasons. With the rise in COVID cases and the resulting quarantines by Public Health from exposure we believe it is time to make a change to our masking policy.

Recently Governor DeWine and the Ohio Department of Health Director, Dr. Bruce Vanderhoff, appealed to parents and school officials to bring back mask requirements especially for students in age groups not eligible for the vaccine. The Health Department still states the best way for schools to remain open is for those eligible for the vaccine to get the vaccine. The Governor and Director also stated that if a child cannot be vaccinated, they should wear a mask. The message was clear, if schools are to remain open then vaccinations and wearing masks are needed to keep the virus from spreading. New case reports are matching last February's numbers and are on the rise.

Recognizing our youngest population is not yet eligible for the vaccine we need to add a layer of protection. As a result of the information from the Governor and the Director, we will add a layer of protection to our **Pre-K-6 students with a mask requirement beginning Monday, August 23, 2021.**

Wearing masks in grades 7-12 is strongly recommended. We are seeing many exposure situations that could be avoided if students were wearing masks or were vaccinated. If you would like your child to stay in school, have them wear a mask. Masks are still required on school buses for all students.

Adding this layer of protection for our youngest learners will eliminate quarantines being issued by Public Health when exposed to a positive COVID-19 case. The outcome we are seeking is to keep kids in school safely. Our parents and community have been supportive throughout these trying times and we are confident that you will help us keep kids in school. **We will continue to monitor the number of cases and other recommendations from the medical community and adjust our protocols accordingly.**